

## Background

- **Organization name:** Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL)
- **Organization address:** 3400 N. Austin, Chicago, IL 60643
- **Organization contact person, contact email, and phone number:** Tre Childress, [tchildress@auslchicago.org](mailto:tchildress@auslchicago.org), 708.200.9850
- **Organization mission:** AUSL creates schools of excellence by developing highly effective teachers and transforming educational outcomes for students in the lowest performing schools.

## Approach

AUSL Advisory Services provides services and support to LEAs/schools in three interdependent components: 1) governance and management; 2) curriculum and instruction; and 3) climate and culture. This interdependency provides a foundation that reflects the whole child approach prominent in ESSA.

We believe we are the best advisory support organization in the national landscape today because of three primary reasons:

1. Each engagement, whether it be a full-day workshop or a multi-year contract, is **bespoke** to the needs of our clients. We work with leaders from the district or school to understand the context and challenges to create an experience where each participant feels empowered in their own area of expertise to realize incremental change in practice leading to transformative change in their students' outcomes.
2. We live this work - our practices and innovations - every day through our network of 31 public neighborhood schools across the highest needs communities in Chicago. What we share with you is not theory or high-level pedagogy, but is **proven practice** - that you can see in action at our schools throughout our engagement.
3. Our goal is to ensure implementation success. We approach each engagement with a focus on imparting best practice knowledge but also, and more importantly, building capacity at the district and/or school-level to ensure you have the skills, resources, and tools to sustain change on your own.

Whenever choosing a partner, fit must be present. During the initial stages of learning about each other, we focus on the following elements to assess this fit:

1. The most important element for a successful partnership is to be **mission-aligned**. We both have to believe in the capacity of the students that we serve and our ability to transform the trajectory of those students.
2. **Relationships are key**. We must work towards the same goal. This means connecting with all stakeholders so we can understand the current culture and assets of the community and mobilize all on the improvement journey.

## Impact

AUSL Advisory Services has partners with 40+ school districts, 450+ teachers impacting 250,000+ students nationwide throughout our existence.

### **Maywood, District 89:** *Transforming School Culture and Climate to Drive Student Outcomes*

The Maywood Public School District #89 ("D89") serves a diverse population of students and families just west of downtown Chicago, with majority of students Black, Latino, and/or low-income. Leading into the 2014-15 school year, district leaders decided to transform from nine

K-8 elementary schools to seven K-5 and two 6-8 middle schools in order to better support students' transition into high school. This change resulted in previously isolated populations of students coming together in new school and classroom environments with new teaching dynamics. Such change shocked the system of status quo and, without the right tools, school leaders, staff and, most of all, students struggled to adapt. The school year saw a noticeable rise drop in attendance and increase in in-school and out-of-school student suspensions at the new middle schools - and district leadership recognized an urgent need to uncover, address, and ameliorate the root causes of the challenges the middle schools were facing to continue to meet the needs of their students, their families, and the community.

Maywood District #89 began working with AUSL's Advisory Services team in the 2015-16 school year and, under its guidance, developed a multi-pronged and targeted strategy to address these challenges at the new middle schools, which included adopting clear standards and policies to transform the school and classroom environment and building systems for school-level goal-setting and continuous improvement. Early signs of progress are positive with both in-school and out-of-school suspensions on the significant decline, and student MAP attainment and growth outcomes on the rise.

**East St. Louis, District 189:** *Building the ESL Teacher Residency Using a AUSL's Proven Model*

East St. Louis' District #189 serves a predominantly Black, Latino, and low-income set of students across 8 schools. In 2017, district leadership approached AUSL Advisory Services to begin a discussion to develop a teacher residency program for their district based on the structure and success of the Chicago Teacher Residency. These discussions have culminated in a multi-year engagement, starting in the fall/winter of 2017, to support the district in developing the East St. Louis Urban Teacher Residency Program. The work entails support in helping designated East St. Louis staff to build a program management system (university partnerships, personnel structure, roles, funding), selecting and developing a training site, mentor teacher and resident recruiting and training development and implementation, and post-residency supports.

**Clark County School District, Nevada:** *Driving Data-Driven Decision-Making Across a Network of Elementary, Middle and High Schools*

By becoming a preferred ESSA vendor in the state of Nevada, AUSL Advisory Services is widening its footprint nationally. Contracted in early 2018, AUSL will work with eight schools in Clark County, Nevada, who are struggling to drive data-driven decision-making using their relatively new state mandated STAR accountability system. The scope of project in Clark County includes working with staff to develop structures for improving student engagement, supporting teachers and leaders in classroom-based and school-based decision-making, measuring and maximizing student intervention programs, and enhancing the collaboration time of teachers and administrators to transform student outcomes. The outcomes of this work will ensure the schools in AUSL's cohort in Clark County will be on the path toward achieving curricular and assessment coherence, excellence in instruction driven by a strong curriculum, and implementation of clear data management and inquiry cycles involving all adults in each building.